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City-Cowley County
Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 21, 2020

County COVID-19 Cases surpass 100 – new death reported.

The City Cowley County Health Department continues to test exposed or symptomatic residents for COVID-19 in the community. The testing week of July 13 through July 17, 2020 was more active than normal at the Health Department as more than 130 people were tested during the 5-day span.

Testing results for the week detected 30 new cases of COVID-19 in the community. There have been 47 total new cases thus far in July 2020.

Contact tracing and disease investigation indicates that the spread of the virus continues to be communal in nature and is being passed through person to person close contact. 20 cases were attributed to intimate spread within a small number of family units where multiple family members have taken ill.

Cases have been on the increase in Cowley County. The Health Department is offering the following data to help illustrate the current illness activity levels.

Total Cases	Male	Female			
118	58	60			
Location	67005	67156	Other		
	96	17	5		
Ethnicity	Hispanic/Latino	Not Hispanic	Other		
	57	41	20		
Age Distribution	0-18	19-30	31-50	51-65	65+
	10	32	57	13	6

One case ended tragically. A 34-year-old Hispanic-Latino male tested positive during the week and developed increasingly significant symptoms that resulted in an urgent need of care by first responders. The man was taken for medical help but did not survive, succumbing to his illness on Friday July 17, 2020.

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The data indicates that there is a significantly higher incidence of illness in the Arkansas City vicinity when compared to other communities in the county. This is attributed to the perceived number of multigenerational or extended families within one house in the community.

Pathways to infection continue to indicate, that in family unit contagion, a specific person is exposed through employment or social activity which is then spread to other family or household members. The results of these exposures are multiple cases rapidly discovered.

Some of the ongoing cases in the community still tie to the late May outbreak attributed to social activity and the rapid spread to the local employee workforce. That outbreak spread systemically to numerous people in the county and will continue to do so.

The Health Department has also recorded isolated cases where sports or social activity have been the exposure pathway. Players that are on traveling teams for various sports have taken ill and required testing. These teams are often made of regionally based players from multiple communities which exacerbates exposure. Other cases are connected to people who have engaged in close contact social activities in other communities, such as going to nightclubs or parties where large groups have gathered. None of the individuals that have taken ill have reported the use of masks, social distancing or personal protective hygiene, rather most thought that the threat of illness was exaggerated or that they would not be exposed.

It is human nature to desire a rapid return to normal. However, the virus remains active in our community. Please do not take risks that are unnecessary. If you feel ill, stay home do not continue to go to work or interact in the community, (i.e. shopping, social interactions) and spread the virus to others. In order to avoid contracting this virus consider every person you come in contact with as potentially being ill. Observe appropriate social distance, wear a mask when in areas where people are gathered and wash and sanitize your hands often. If you develop symptoms of illness contact the Health Department and get tested.

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